


March 2016

A Literary Magazine &
Newsletter of Jewell School

The Jay



ENCHANTED
FOREST

p. 12

There's more to Jewell School than meets the eye

From Superintendent Alice Hunsaker

Dear Jewell Community,

The months of March and April annually signify the completion of the long duration of winter during January, February and March as well as March's Spring Break. April brings the beginning of the home stretch of the school year.

This past month the school held the annual Classified Employee's Celebration Week during the week of March 7-11, 2016. Classified staff members include the secretaries, media, technology and educational assistants, playground assistants, cafeteria workers, maintenance staff, bus drivers and office staff that support our students and help our school run smoothly. The Jewell School District is extremely fortunate to have an outstanding group of classified staff members who are skilled at their jobs and whose work makes a daily difference for our students and staff. Their dedication makes it possible for every student to achieve success.

Every school day, approximately 150 students come through the doors of our school. Our classified staff members play a critical role in ensuring that each school day is a positive experience for every child.

In Jewell, classified staff members help students get to school safely, provide a nutritious breakfast and lunch, work with students who need additional academic support and ensure that our facilities are clean and safe. In addition, dedicated classified staff members work diligently to help teachers, administrators and community members with office and technology support to ensure strong communication and that the wide ranging needs of our district's students are met.

This coming April and May, most of our students will have their second experience taking the new Oregon state performances tests, the Smarter Balanced (SBAC). Mr. Scott, our technology team, the teachers, students and many of the faculty have been working hard to be prepared and to make sure our students are prepared. I am excited for our students to meet the challenge of these new tests and see the improvement from a year ago. The test results provide the teachers data to help make individual student instructional adjustments. Further, the aggregate test results give the staff valuable data with which to plan for both short and long term school improvement goals.

March, April, and May also are the time of the year that the school begins planning in earnest for the upcoming school year. For the Superintendent, Business Manager and School Board/Budget Committee, it means preparation, presentation and subsequently approval of the following year's budget. As the Jewell Superintendent, I take the responsibility of the fiscal health of our district very seriously and will be presenting a solid plan for the 2016-2017 school year to our Budget Committee. For our teachers and students, it means planning and forecasting for next school year's required and elective classes and programs.

Alice Hunsaker, Superintendent



The Jay Staff

Jon Thompson and Sean Hinson, photographers

Wynter Forsgren, graphic artist

Staff: Taya Rowley, Dallas Ritchie, Jon Thompson, Shyann Prendergast, Alyscia Littlepage

Editor of Falcon Graphics: Dallas Ritchie Yearbook Editors: Allie Kosmas, Emma Guillen

Advisor: Don Anderson

Cover photo by Don Anderson

From Principal Mike Scott

Dear Jewell Community,

Lockout and Lockdown Drills

The Jewell Safety Team has been working on updating our safety procedures this past year and as I explained in the last issue of The Jay, we held our first Lockout drill and will be holding a Lockdown drill on March 30th at 9:15. As you remember, during a Lockdown drill the call will come over the PA system – “Lockdown Drill, Locks, Lights, Out of Sight”. Staff are directed to bring any students that are in the hallway in to the classroom, Lock the door, turn out the lights, and get out of sight. The Sheriff’s office will be present at this drill to give us feedback on how we can improve our system. Please call the school if you have any questions.

Early Childhood Health and Educational Clinic

On April 19th, the NWRESA and Clatsop Kinder Ready will be sponsoring the third Annual free Early Childhood Health and Educational Clinic for all 2 – 5 year old students in Clatsop County. The event will be held at the Seaside Convention Center. The clinic is a very comprehensive tool to give parents an idea of how their child is doing overall. The screening will include the following components:

1. Physical – The children are screened for height, weight, blood pressure, and temperature.
2. Developmental Screening – Students will be screened on communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal-social skills.
3. Vision – This screening will be done by The Casey Eye Institute or Oregon Lions Clubs with a new tool that electronically records detailed information regarding each child’s eyes.
4. Hearing & Speech – Clinicians will be conducting auditory testing on students to check their hearing. They will also be asking students questions and listening to see if there are concerns with articulation or general speech.
5. Dental – Clinicians will conduct an exam of the child’s teeth or simply have him/her just sit in the dental chair if that is more appropriate for the child.
6. Behavior/Play – Staff will be observing students to see how they interact with other children and how they respond to the items available at the play area.
7. Nutrition – The questions to parents focus on what the child ate during the last 24 hours as well as the past 7 days. Nutrition advice will be given to parents.
8. Community Resources – Information on the library, NW Parenting, Migrant Education, and other available services will be given to parents.
9. Immunization Consultation – Parents will be able to get current information on normal immunizations and guidance on where to get immunizations.
10. Review of clinic results – The staff will briefly review the Developmental Screening and the Education/Health Exam if any “follow up” is needed.

We will be providing a bus to transport our parents and children to the clinic for those who need transportation. If you, or someone you know, would like to go to this clinic or needs transportation please call the school at 503-755-2451.

Kindergarten Roundup

Kindergarten Roundup will be on April 20th at 1:00 and 6:00 P.M. in the Kindergarten Room. Lisa Erdt, our kindergarten teacher, will be going over expectations for Kindergarten and helping parents register their students. Please call the school to let us know if you will be coming during the 1:00 or 6:00 session.

Mike Scott, Principal

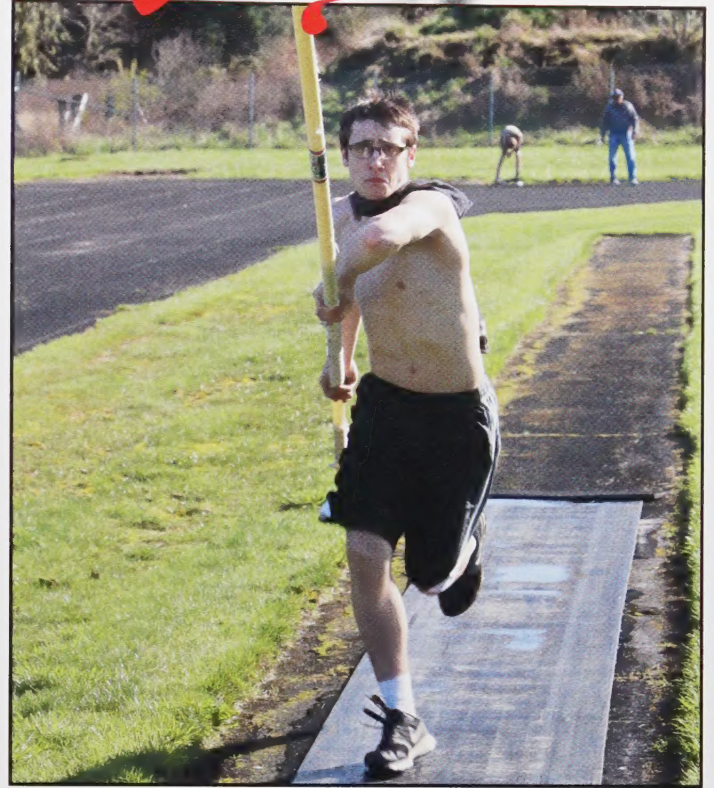


TRACK &



Clockwise: Gabi Morales, Ben Stahly, Rhett Gerken, Dallas Ritchie. Photos by Don Anderson

FIELD



Clockwise: Emma Guillen, Trystan Silva, the Jewell HS Track team.

Jay's coaches, athletes excited about season

Story by Sean Hinson, photos by Don Anderson

With track & field officially here Head Coach David Fix sat down with *The Jay* to answer a few questions. The Jays had just come off a terrific showing at the Mapleton track meet and both coaches and athletes were excited about what the season has in store.

"I'm excited about the whole season in general because we had a very successful year last year, and we only lost one to graduation. Mostly everyone is back from last year. The team learned a lot last year, so we have a starting point this year, and some of the members know who I am and how I like to coach," Fix said.

He told *The Jay* that he was expecting bigger things this year because we had successful year last year and the team had less athletes.

The men last year had seven place winners in the district track meet and Jewell scored 33 points, that is the most points the men have had in ten years. In 2010 there were eight place winners, but they only had 30 points.

On the women's side there were 13 place winners, and that's the highest number of winners in ten years. They also scored 66 points, and that is all the highest in ten years.

There were seven boys and seven girls last year. This year there are ten boys and eight girls.

"I didn't get to come out and try to recruit very much, so the credit really goes to the track team. I think the athlete's success from last year motivated other athletes to come out and participate this year," Fix said.

Zac Hanner is an up and coming Jewell track star, excited about what track will do for him physically, and what he can do for the team. "I want to do well in all my events, and this is my first year doing track," he said. He is currently participating in discus, javelin, and long jump.

"I am excited to try pole vault and hopefully make it to state in the 100 meter and 200 meter dash," said Ben Stahly. He is participating in the 100 meter 200 meter 1500 meter, pole vault, javelin, long jump,

high jump, and the 4 x 400 meter relay race.

Jays do well in first two meets

On March 17th the Jewell high school had their second track meet. The head coach at the end of the meet said if the team as individuals competed the way they had been competing, they would shock themselves on how well they would do later in the year.

I asked a few track participants about how they thought they performed. When I asked Gabi Morales how she thought she did, she told me she did better in the 100 hurdles and the 300 hurdles than she thought she would have.

"I could improve on my steps in hurdles and my curve on my run up in high jump," she said.

"I did my best and I kept it real," said Daniel Kuhnly. "I expected a little more from myself, but I still tried my best. I could improve by practicing javelin more and I could try and pace myself a little better in his distance races. I could warm up more before my events, too," Kuhnly said.



Serena Haddock, javelin

Jewell School honors the following students

Regular Attendance – Absent 1 day or less

Alyscia Littlepage
Gabi Morales
Rylan Murray
Sophi Olvera
Jon Thompson

Perfect Attendance

Caitlyn Smith-Sivalski
Rhett Gerken
Kitara Green
Lillie Kaczinski
Jacob Lilley
Xavia Neaves
Shyann Prendergast
Trystan Silva

Honorable Mention – 3.00 to 3.4

Wynter Forsgren
Hanna Littlepage
Jacob Lilley
Kitara Green
Alyscia Littlepage
Zack Hanner
Rylee Lawrence
Nathaniel Kane
Serena Haddock
Rhett Gerken
Meagan Golden
Sara Golden
Thomas Meehan
Ben Stahly

Honor Roll – 3.5 to 3.9

Lillie Kaczinski
Heidi Hollenbach
Caitlyn Smith-Sivalski
Zack Hart
Ashley Wammack
Rebecca Wammack
Gabi Morales
Sophia Olvera
Joe Armstrong
Emma Sadtler
Makayla Atwood

Grand Academic Honors - 4.0

Niqui Blodgett
Daniel Khunly
Trystan Silva



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Jewell track team continues to grow

Story & photos by Don Anderson

When David Fix first came to Jewell High School a year ago to work with the track and field athletes, he had been used to working with some of the elite athletes of the sport, both at the University of Oregon and at Lewis & Clark College. If the change to such a small school was shocking, so was the change in attitude that he has brought to the Blue Jay track program.

This year 18 students have come out for Jewell track, and though the team was too small to win their first track meet by points, they got more first places than the other three schools at the meet that included Mapleton, Triangle Lake and Siletz Valley.

One of Jewell's young stars, sophomore Ben Stahly, came away with three first places and one second place at the Mapleton meet.

"I competed in the high jump, the 100-meter sprint and the 200-meter sprint. I also ran in the 4 x 300-meter relay," said Stahly, whose brother Josh and sister Rachel were also gifted athletes at Jewell before they graduated.

"In the high jump I hit 5' 6" which is a personal record for me. I would like to beat my brother who jumped 6' 0" and someday I would like to beat the Jewell Record which is 6' 5".

Sophomore Gabby Morales has high hopes for her team this year. "We're definitely ahead of where we were last year," she said. "The coaches work with each of us personally and we are doing better and better." Morales won two events at the Mapleton meet, the high jump (4'9") and the 300 meter hurdles.

Sean Hinson, a sophomore at Jewell, enjoys the field events more than the track events. "I've put more time in javelin and discus than I have the other events," said Hinson. It was time well spent, because Hinson won both events at Mapleton, sending the javelin 143'10" and the discus 106' 2". While he didn't do as well long jump, triple jump or 100 meter run, he's happy with his personal and his team's results.

"It helps to use the weight room every day after track practice. I also have weights class first period," he said. Hinson is excited about the direction that Head Coach David Fix and Assistant Coach Joe Kaczenski are giving the team.

"The coaches get around to all of the people during practice, but they set aside days for certain groups as well," he said.

"We have a lot of talented people on our Jewell team," Hinson said. "We should go a long way this season."



Top: Emma Sadtler; Bottom: Lillie Kaczenski



Jewell School PTO

Annual Egg Hunt

Date: Saturday, March 26, 2016

Time: 10:00 am

Place: Jewell Meadows Wildlife Refuge

Ages: 0-5th Grade

***Join Us For A
Hoppin'
Good Time!***

***Bring
your own
basket!***



"Gossip" Artwork Copyright © 2016 Winter Forsgren

The cesspool of reality TV

By Rylee Lawrence

Some would say Reality TV has been a part of our pop-culture since OJ Simpson's TV show, but it has grown since then and is a major source that feeds the very consumers that create our pop-culture today, and in a way is pop-culture itself. Actually, Reality TV was first "invented" and aired November 1948. The program was called *Candid Camera*. It featured an ex-talk show host, Allen Funt, broadcasting unsuspecting ordinary people reacting to pranks. It was wildly popular. If we compare modern broadcasting versus some of the first Reality TV programs though, we notice that they are completely different. Today, most Reality TV programs seem to have one common goal, to sell and influence consumers. From fashion, food, and social opinions, to political views, and even language, Reality TV has literally shaped our pop culture.

The process of creating these shows is much more simple than you would think. Anyone can pitch an idea for a show. Once you have an idea, you first pick a broadcasting company, such as MTV (a very popular broadcaster of Reality TV shows today) and pitch them your idea for the show. If they like it they will choose to sponsor it and then it is essentially on its way to production.

What influences the Reality TV creator's ideas? The very Reality TV shows that are currently being viewed. In this way, Reality TV keeps its own existence going. It's one big circle, inspiring young minds to create their own shows, that in turn do the very same in the near future for other people waiting to be influenced.

Some would say that Reality TV only truly got popular after the show *Juiced with OJ Simpson* in 2006. Much like the very first reality TV show *Candid Cam-*

era, OJ Simpson had a professional makeup artist and costume designer dress him up, as well as the other actors, as offbeat characters and prank people. Oftentimes they used scare pranks.

Today, some of the most famous modern Reality TV shows are *Jersey Shore*, *The Kardashians*, and *Kate Plus 8*. These all have the same premise: camera operators simply follow every waking hour of whoever the show is based on, from sunrise to sunset, such as a house full of young adults and their nightlife of partying and drinking, or a family of three generations only gaining large amounts of viewers because they get paid to broadcast their lives. The only way to make it entertaining is to portray the life that their consumers want, making their own lives that very same virtual reality that we just have to push a button and sit in front of a screen to watch.

However, viewers only want a temporary dose of the Reality TV experience, and through time and technology, they are able to have it the way they want it, while feeling safe knowing it is happening to some-

one else. Being the subject of a Reality TV show has only shown negative effects on the participants. It has been shown to dramatically alter decision making skills. For example, Shain Gandee died doing exactly what made him a star on MTV. He was on a show called *Buckwild* tearing through mud holes in his pickup, taking life threatening changes that most others wouldn't, living "free



and reckless." The police said that he and two other friends were drinking late and thought it would "make good sense" to go mudding while intoxicated. Gandee eventually found himself and his rig stuck in a deep mud pit and for an "unknown cause" driver and passengers could not get out. The mud covered and filled his exhaust and all three of them were pronounced dead the next day. Cause of death: carbon monoxide poisoning. This is just one of an endless list of poor decisions the subjects of Reality TV shows make for viewers that will ultimately alter their lives, and in some cases, ending them. Reality TV is not a good influence and is the very opposite of what it claims to be, reality.

WELCOME TO THE ENCHANTED FOREST

Story and photo by Don Anderson

It is easy to extol the benefits of Jewell School. Small class sizes. Family atmosphere. Great lunch program. Staff who care about each and every child. More than adequate technology. Emphasis on field trips, et cetera. Sure Jewell School, like all school districts, has its challenges too, but we have a lot to be thankful for here. Why then does Jewell School's 80-acre campus get lost in the list of its assets?

Jewell School has an amazing array of fields and forests surrounding it that are just begging to be used by classes of all ages and subjects, and now that better weather is on the way (knock on wood!) maybe it is time to use Jewell's Enchanted Forest for some amazing field trips that are right out our back door.

While the forestry and biology classes have been out several times this quarter (and I have the muddy shoes to prove it), there are other classes that would benefit from our woods and meadows too: language arts for inspiration for poetry or narrative writing; art class for sketching and painting; math class for applications in geometry, trigonometry, and pattern recognition; social sciences for the study of group dynamics; PE and health for the exercise value; and grade school classes for all the above.

Spring is in full bloom in the Jewell Forest and there are countless things for children of all ages to explore. In our area the yellow-violet (*Viola pubescens*) is one of the first flowers of spring. They look like little golden nuggets on the forest floor. Of course, if you are lucky, you will spy a group of majestic Pacific trilliums

(*Trillium ovatum*) in our forest too. Trilliums can actually get more beautiful as they age from a pure white to a deep purple color.

It is the time of year when a lot of the birds in our area are feathering their nests, literally. In the meadows around Jewell School there are dozens of different species waiting to be observed by children and adults alike. Red-winged blackbirds (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) are especially vocal right now, and the turkey vultures (*Cathartes aura*) have made their way back from Central and South America where they winter.

Within the Enchanted Forest itself you can see all kinds of creatures springing into life. Pacific tree frogs, Douglas squirrels, coyotes, rough skinned newts, short-tailed weasels, are just a few of the animals that you are likely to come across if you don't make too much noise while walking through the forest.

The forest has always been a place of mystery and delight for the human imagination. Authors one from Dante to J.K. Rowling have used forests some of the best parts of their stories. Remember the forest that Dante gets lost in at the beginning of *The Divine Comedy*?

Or the the Forbidden Forest in various Harry Potter books, where a lot of the best action takes place? For thousands of years forest have represented some of the deepest parts of our imagination...our psyche.

So, isn't it time to make use of one of the best resources of Jewell School? It is right there begging to be used, especially in this era where we have become too much of an indoor culture. This spring reward your mind and body, and those of your kids, with a stroll through the Enchanted Forest.



Music Activity 🎵 Classroom Tours

KINDERGARTEN ROUNDUP

Welcome to the
Jewell School
Kindergarten Roundup!

April 20, 2016

Two times: 1:00 and 6:00

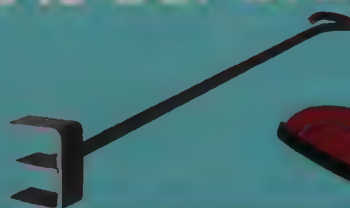
Contact Lisa Erdt to sign
up at 503-755-2451

Story Time 📖 Art Activity

P.E. 🏃 Computer Activity

Refreshments 🍰

Jewell School
"Excellence is Our Brand"





JEWELL HS BAND

Photos by Mike Stahly





COMPETES FOR STATE

On March 1, 2016, Jewell High School band members compete for state qualification in St. Helens, Oregon.



Nice people still exist, but sometimes they are hard to find

A speech by Caitlyn Smith given to her Communications 101 class at Jewell.

I'm just going to start simple here. Any Christians in the room, please raise your hand? Good. Now are there any other religions? Alright, nice. Any atheists? M'kay. Are there any people in here that have any other sexuality than just firmly straight? Okay. Now, are we not supposed to be able to live our lives without being judged? All of us? Even those of us that just raised our hands for another religion, being an atheist, or that of a different sexuality?

The answer is, yes. We should have a place to live where we aren't judged. You already know this. All of you, even those that are firmly Christian, or even totally without religion. You know what it feels like to be hurt. You know what it feels like to be criticized and insulted. All of you! And now, for finger pointing. Christians, you're doing it wrong. I

mean, I can point out the Christians who are doing it right, but the vast majority of you need to open your eyes. IT'S NOT THAT HARD.

Your God calls for you to not judge ANYONE even despite their religion or sexuality. Those of you yelling at me on social media sites, telling me that I'm going to Hell for my interest in both genders? No. That's not okay. And I don't yell back either. I only

stick up for others of my kind. And no, I do not mean just humans. A lot of you can defend yourselves. I mean the defenseless. I mean those of the LGBT Community that are too scared to even tell their parents about their interests because they're afraid of being shamed. I mean those certain Christians that are shamed by those that don't understand their OWN RELIGION! Come on people! It's not that hard to quit all of the judgment and put aside our differences! We are all human!

Now, to get back on topic. Some of us think that all Muslims are bad, yes? And this is because of the recent attacks by ISIS, the Muslim extremists, yes? Well, as said by most Muslims, extremists are not following the traditional religion. They are following (and yes, I'm going to say it) something that they made up. What they're doing is not written of in the Quran at all, they are just simply doing what they see fit, and saying that their God told them to do so. So you see, not all Muslims are bad. Most

of them are actually quite kind, especially if you think of those in Ancient India. When conquering land and people, the ancient Muslims did one thing that not, even we, the "greatest people" did. They practiced religious tolerance. And for those of you that are too stubborn to get it through your thick skull, that means that they gave people freedom.

That's right. Freedom. Even the women had rights! I honestly think that they are better than us Americans, at least in this sense. They are smart. Ancient India was far more advanced than the Europeans, and we are descendants of those Europeans. And they were very much more kind than us. The Europeans executed people with different religions, and even some scientists were shamed for sharing their knowledge. Even Ptolemy's ideas

weren't accepted because of Christianity, and look at where that stubbornness got us. We're a few years behind where we could be because of that! I'm not saying it's only Christians, nor am I referring to all of them. My best friend is a Christian, and she's wonderful! But you see ladies and gentleman, she is doing it right. She knows what her religion is all about: Acceptance, bringing joy to others, and just being a good person. Whereas all these other idiots appar-

ently don't know how to read. For those of you that are against gay marriage, or all of the people who "invaded" our country, or even just disagree with somebody just because their beliefs are different than yours, newsflash:

Not everything is about you. Your beliefs aren't the greatest, and your opinions are not superior. The reason that you don't get along with these people that are different, is because you think in your own mind, that you are better than them. But you're not. Not accepting them for these reasons, that makes you low. That makes you the lowest of the low. The only problem is that there's too many of intolerant people. The world is full of them, and I think everyone here agrees. The reason that wars start is because people think that their belief is better than the other person's. They just come from stupid little arguments that really could just be resolved on the spot if they would only see things from a new perspective! The thing is, people today don't take the time to listen. They just act



without a single thought. My point is for all of the people that don't give to the homeless when they absolutely could, or for all of the people that do something stupid and don't think of the consequences.

Now, I mentioned the ancient Muslims and how they practiced religious tolerance. But if they could do that so long ago, may I ask, why we are not advanced enough to do this ourselves? We have made so many advances along the years. I mean, most of you probably have a smartphone in your pocket right now, and that is an amazing feat of technology. But if we are intelligent enough to make these things, and we are "more intelligent than any other species", then how come we cannot get along? I mean, just think about how mistreated different races, and even women are! Still!

Even years and years after we were supposed to have our rights, and years after the racism should've been terminated, people are still having issues respecting women and people of a different skin color. I actually saw

a Tumblr post that ties in very well with this topic. This person asked the question 'Why do guys look so good without makeup?' Well, most people would say that it's simply because they don't need it. But do females need it? No, we do not. And the person who answered this question brought that up. Their answer was 'It's because society hasn't told them they look bad without it yet.'

And sadly, they're right. Much of society has told women that they need to be perfect and beautiful, and a lot of girls lose self esteem because we know we're not perfect. Because perfection does not exist, it's just an idea made up by some stupid human years and years ago to make people strive for something better. But that 'something better' is unreachable. Especially with where we are right now. We are probably more far from perfection than we have ever been before. Nice people still exist, but they are more rare to stumble across lately. But this is just my point. If some people weren't such narcissistic jerks, then everyone would understand this and just get along.



JEWELL SCHOOL DISTRICT #8

83874 HIGHWAY 103

JEWELL, OR 97138

PHONE (503) 755-2451 FAX (503) 755-0616

Request for Proposal

2016-2017 Contract for Jewell School District Pre-School/Daycare

Jewell School District (JSD) welcomes existing businesses, individuals or other organizations to compete for the contractual opportunities to provide the Pre-School-Daycare Program for the JSD 2016-2017 school year. We are looking to begin with a one year contract with the opportunity to extend the contract upon agreement spring 2017.

Jewell School has an existing classroom appropriate for age three to five programs and provides the related infrastructure. The district carried a contract for many years prior to the 2014-2015 school year. The past two years, the district has operated the pre-school and daycare. It was agreed at the time the district agreed to provide our own daycare that we would look for an outside contractor again in the Spring of 2015 and 2016. Students and families have transportation provided to the Pre-School by school district. The K-12 district nutrition services are available to the Pre-School.

In addition to existing pre-school providers, this RFP is also an opportunity for someone who either has an established home child care business and wants to expand or has always wanted to start a preschool business but did not have the space.

The Jewell School Board will be evaluating the submitted Request for Proposals after the April 15, 2016 deadline for submission. Those who submit an RFP will be notified of the selection timeline or further steps at that time. This may include a request for additional information, possible interview or offer of a contract as well as other steps the board will choose at that time. JSD retains the prerogative to not award a contract.

In order to be considered complete, the attached RFP must be completed and received by Jewell School District by 3:00 pm April 15, 2016. The Jewell School Board realizes that this is an extensive RFP. The district encourages applicants to submit proposals that outline their vision as completely as possible at this time. Proposals can be submitted by mail or personally at the above address or electronically. Fax applications will not be accepted. Submit proposals electronically or email questions if needed to: Alice Hunsaker – aliceh@jewell.k12.or.us

The argument for homework

By Ron Bloker
Photo by Don Anderson

I have a vision of a perfect day in the classroom. Students arrive with completed practice work (homework) in hand. Students that had questions have already worked them out, by calling me at home, working with other students, sending me a message through the Remind application, or coming in for assistance outside of class. When the bell rings, I post the solutions so students can check their work allowing students to validate their processes and revisit incorrect answers and identify errors. I then address any questions that students still have to ensure all students understand the concepts and processes. Ideally this should take no more than five minutes. The next 20 minutes are spent learning new concepts through direct instruction or exploration and the following 10 minutes are spent working on guided practice. Finally, the last 20 minutes are spent with students working independently on practice work. The unfinished practice problems are completed outside of class as homework, which focuses on applying skills learned in class.

I do not assign homework for any skills that have not been rehearsed in class. The reality is, I do not have enough class time for students to apply and practice skills to solve each type of problem. For example, solving multi-step equations. These equations include positive and negative solutions, fractions and decimals. These equations that may have no solution,

or may have every number as a solution which must be examined as well. There really is not enough time to teach, rehearse and examine every possible type of equation or every solution in the precious 54 minutes of a regular class period. I believe that homework is necessary to develop skills, especially in my world that is mathematics.

The question of whether homework should be given has been a hot-topic issue on and off through the years, as far back as during World War One (Walker 2015). However, I have recently noticed an alarming trend in the past few years. Students are struggling much more to complete practice outside of class. This is not unique to Jewell. A school district in Tennessee banned graded homework for the 2013-2014 school year. The district felt that the large majority of students did not have the needed support at home to complete

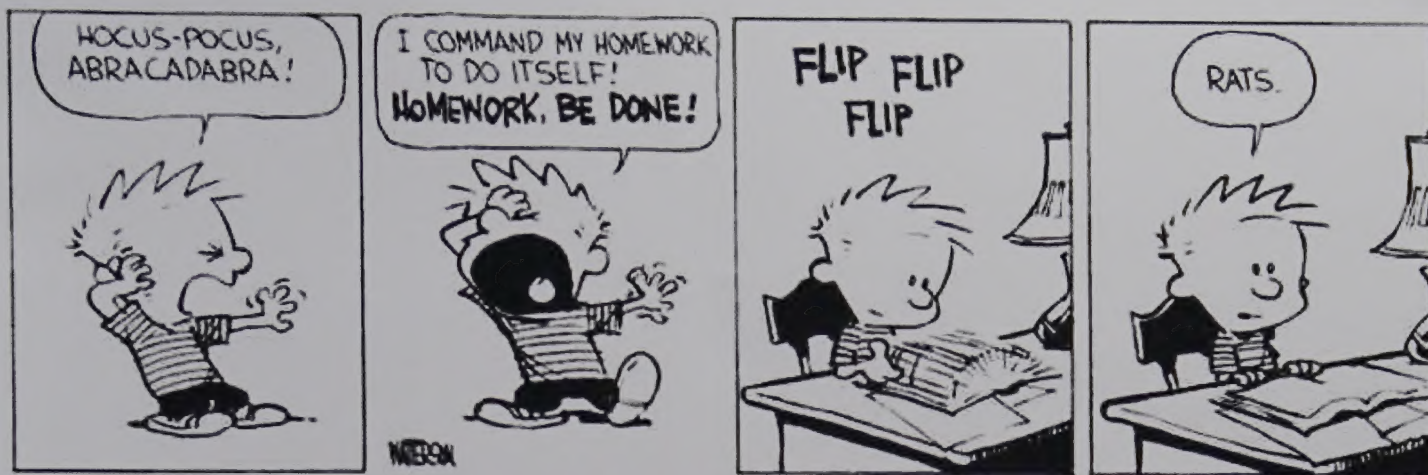
homework (Graham 2014). This brings me to a dilemma, how do I ensure students have enough practice to master important skills and concepts when students don't complete their homework?

I believe to correctly answer this dilemma we must ask ourselves a couple questions. First, "What do we want from our students?" Do we want our students to be college ready, or

do we want our students to be career ready? Currently, our state legislators have determined that they want all of our graduating seniors to be college ready and our state graduation requirements have driven our curriculum requirements. This leads us to then ask, "Can students become college ready without practicing skills outside of class?" I personally do not believe they can. I believe that homework, particularly in mathematics, is absolutely necessary.

As further evidence of our society's college ready expectations, the United States is regularly criticized for our ranking among graduates from other developed countries. For example, a 2012 study on





mathematics performance showed that 15 year-olds in the US ranked 35th internationally (Desilver 2015). Educators and legislators alike often use mathematics rankings as a tool to initiate educational reform. This can be seen by the national movement toward Common Core standards. I don't believe curriculum reform is the answer. We are not on an even playing field. Many of the countries that score above the US in mathematics, have a societal expectation that students will spend time outside of class on homework. How many times have we had young foreign exchange students that surpassed their US peers in our schools? Additionally, most countries do not expect all graduates to attend college. Many countries have college entrance exams near the students 10th year that determine which students will be allowed to attend college. Germany and China are two such countries. These students have an intrinsic drive to complete homework.

In my experience, I am lucky to have 50% of my students practice skills and concepts outside of class. Studies report that the average time spent on homework outside of school each week for a US student is 6.1 hours (Kohli 2014). While we do have some students here in Jewell that spend six hours and more on homework, we have even more students that spend little or no time on homework. I understand that there are many other factors outside of the classroom that may affect the students ability to perform homework. As a society we have a growing number of families that are struggling to pay monthly bills and put food on the table. Students may also not have a safe environment or a quiet place to study. This causes teachers like myself to struggle with classroom management. Do I move on, leaving students behind, or do I re-teach the concepts that some students have already mastered and risk them losing interest and the opportunity to grow? The loser in both scenarios is

always and undoubtedly our students.

So what is the right answer, should teachers assign homework or should learning be contained in the classroom? Unlike a mathematics equation, there is no correct answer. Even among educators there are differences of opinions. That being said, I personally believe that students need to rehearse in order to master the skills and concepts represented on tests and quizzes. Homework is the link between rehearsing skills and concepts learned in class, and ensuring that the pace of our classroom will expose students to the essential skills required for graduation as dictated by our state legislature. I have chosen to deal with the complexity of this situation by incentivizing homework while not making it worth so much of a student's grade that they will not pass my class without it.

In mathematics, homework unfortunately is a necessary evil.

(The Jewell staff is committed to helping all students achieve academic goals. After school buses are available Monday through Thursday at 4pm and 5pm. High School mathematics students are encouraged to stop by my classroom before school, during lunch, or after school. Students may also call me at home before 10pm or contact me through the Remind App online. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.)

Graham, Edward "Should Schools Be Done With Homework?", <http://neatoday.org/2014/05/13/should-schools-be-done-with-homework/>.

Walker, Tim, "The Great Homework Debate: What's Getting Lost in the Hype", <http://neatoday.org/2015/09/23/the-great-homework-debate-whats-getting-lost-in-the-hype/>

DATES TO REMEMBER

Saturday, April 2	HS Track Estacada 11:00
Monday, April 4	Superintendent's Budget Presentation 6:00 pm
Tuesday, April 5	College /Career Fair Fairgrounds 8:00-12:00
Wednesday, April 6	Late Start/MS Track @ Scappoose 3:30
Thursday, April 7	End of 3rd Quarter HS Track Life Chr. 4:00
Friday, April 8	No School Grading Day Band to Nestucca HS
Saturday, April 9	HS Track Banks Inv.
Tuesday, April 12	Senior Project Night
Wednesday, April 13	Late Start PTO 3:15 Band to Clatskanie
Thursday, April 14	MS Track Warrenton 3:30
Saturday, April 16	HS Track Daily Astorian
Monday, April 18	Budget Meeting 6:00 Board Meeting 7:30



Jewell School District No. 8
83874 Highway 103
Seaside, OR 97138

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